

In the Abstract

Please amend the Abstract as indicated below. The language being added is underlined ("___") and the language being deleted contains strikethrough ("—"):

For the paragraph beginning at page 53, line 1, substitute the following paragraph:

AB Systems and methods for encoding fractional bit rates in a ~~pulse amplitude modulation~~ (PAM) communication system, such as a pulse amplitude modulation (PAM) communication system, are provided. The systems and methods enable a first PAM-transceiver to specify to a second PAM-transceiver a desired fractional bit rate for transmitting data to the first PAM transceiver. In this manner, the systems and methods of the present invention for the first time enable a single standardized specification of a generalized transmitter that may be used to implement any type of fractional encoding or mapping.